



Good afternoon, Sen. Crisco, and Rep. Megna. Thank you for hearing my testimony on: **HB 5517 – AN ACT CONCERNING COST-SHARING FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.**

I am Wendy Foster, Senior State Advocate, for US Pain Foundation, An organization founded by people with pain, for people with pain. US Pain strives to support, educate, and advocate for those living with chronic pain.

I suffer with Parkinson's, severe migraines, effects from a stroke, and spinal stenosis. I take 10 medications each morning, and 3 in the evening, some for pain. My prescriptions add up each month, and I need to budget wisely to be able to afford them. If they were to increase significantly, I would need to make a choice. I would either need to possibly take them less often, or not take them at all. This would severely impact my quality of life, and set my health back.

US Pain supports out-of-pocket cap legislation that protects people with chronic conditions who are subjected to excessive cost-sharing requirements, whether in the form of coinsurance or copayments. US Pain Foundation also supports consumer protections for patients whose conditions for which lower cost or generic alternatives often do not exist. An affordable limit should be placed on the out-of-pocket costs that patients can be required to cover for a 30-day supply of a single prescription medication.

Thanks to innovative new treatments, diseases that were once fatal are now being treated as chronic conditions. However, increasing cost-sharing requirements are putting these breakthrough treatments out of reach for many patients. Insurers now frequently place prescription drugs on different levels or tiers depending on how expensive and specialized they are; the more specialized, the higher the tier they're placed on, and the more patients have to pay. When patients can't afford their medications, the consequences can be serious.

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When cost-sharing becomes a barrier to access, insured patients do not use their medications appropriately, skipping doses in order to save money or abandoning a treatment all together.

I urge you to pass HB 5517, and support patients with chronic illness in CT.